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Political Commentator, Columnist Arianna Huffington Dissects Presidential Election in Lawrence University Convocation

Posted on: September 23rd, 2004 by Rick Peterson

Nationally syndicated columnist, best-selling author and well-known political commentator Arianna Huffington shares her insights on the upcoming presidential election Thursday, Oct. 7 in a Lawrence University convocation.

Huffington presents “The 2004 Election: What’s at Stake?” at 11:10 a.m. in the Lawrence Memorial Chapel. The address, the second in Lawrence’s five-part 2004-05 convocation series, is free and open to the public.

Hailed as one of Washington’s “most influential commentators” by *Newsweek* magazine, Huffington, 54, is the author of 10 books, including the 2003 *New York Times*’ best-seller “Pigs at the Trough,” a scathing indictment of corporate greed and political manipulation.

A one-time staunch conservative whose ideology has since evolved toward more populist views and who now operates outside the two-party system, Huffington ran for governor as an independent in California’s 2003 state recall election — won by Arnold Schwarzenegger — and then wrote a behind-the-scenes account of the election in the book “Fanatics and Fools,” which was published earlier this year.

Politics is a favorite topic for Huffington’s books. In addition to “Pigs at the Trough,” she tackled the subject of political corruption and the need for campaign finance reform in her 2000 book “How to Overthrow the Government” while 1998’s “Greetings from the Lincoln Bedroom” provided a satirical, Alice-in-Wonderland-like fantasy look at the Clinton administration.

Two of Huffington's most popular books were vivid biographies of world famous artists. Her works "Maria Callas: The Woman Behind the Legend" in 1981 and "Picasso: Creator and Destroyer" in 1988 both became international bestsellers. She launched her literary career by challenging modern feminism in "The Female Woman" (1974), criticizing the women's liberation movement for "denying or ignoring the longings of millions of women for intimacy, children, and a family." The book was eventually translated into 11 languages.

A familiar face on the television talk show circuit, Huffington was a frequent guest on "Politically Incorrect" and teamed with Al Franken to provide campaign coverage of the Democratic and Republican conventions in 1996. She also has appeared regularly on MSNBC's "Hardball," CNN's "Crossfire" and Fox's "The O'Reilly Factor" and "Hannity & Colmes."

Extending her political interests beyond the literary world, Huffington co-founded the Center for Effective Compassion, a Michigan-based organization that promotes faith-principled service to the poor as an alternative to government-run social programs, and The Detroit Project, a national campaign that links fuel efficiency to national security and the country's reliance on foreign oil. She also serves on the board of directors of the Points of Light Foundation and A Place Called Home, two organizations that foster community solutions to social problems.

Born in Athens, Greece, Huffington moved to England at the age of 16 and earned a degree in economics from Cambridge University, where she became only the third woman ever elected president of the Cambridge Union, the university's famed debating society.